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RHMFIUU/CJTF HOA IMMEDIATE
RUZEFAA/CDR USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE IMMEDIATE
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SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/E AND A/S CARSON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [PTER](#) [CASC](#) [SO](#)

SUBJECT: SOMALIA - TFG STRUGGLING TO HOLD MOGADISHU GAINS

¶1. Summary. On July 11-12 Transitional Federal Government (TFG) forces and al-Shabaab/Hizbul Islami fought pitched battles that ultimately netted the TFG small but significant gains in the Shibis and Abdi-Aziz districts by July 13. Reportedly over 60 combatants and civilians have been killed. African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) tanks aided the TFG's breakout on July 12, though AMISOM suffered no casualties. One foreign fighter's body captured by the TFG may be that of an American citizen. End Summary

¶2. TFG forces and their allies clashed with al-Shabaab and extremist militias on July 11-12. The fighting reportedly claimed over 60 combatant and civilian lives. On the morning of July 11, al-Shabaab attacked TFG forces in the Shibis and Abdi-Aziz area, at one point advancing to within 1 kilometer of the presidential offices at Villa Somalia. In the late afternoon of July 11, al-Shabaab landed 4 mortars inside Villa Somalia, killing three Ugandan AMISOM soldiers and wounding eight.

¶3. Of note was the capture of a foreign fighter's body on July 11. The TFG subsequently released photos of his face, which were posted on Somali media websites. In an interview with U.S. network Fox News, a spokesman for the Minneapolis-based mother of Jamal Banna, possibly AKA Jamal Aweys, claimed the photos were of her American citizen son.

¶4. On July 12 TFG-aligned forces counterattacked against al-Shabaab. With AMISOM armor support in the offensive's initial stages, the TFG captured significant territory in Mogadishu. Some 8-10 AMISOM tanks and armored personnel carriers from Villa Somalia and other AMISOM bases participated according to AMISOM. In one media interview, and privately to us, AMISOM justified their actions as a defensive response to the July 12 mortar attack. No AMISOM troops were injured in the fighting, according to Ambassador Nicholas Bwakira, the head of AMISOM's Nairobi political office, lending credence to reports al-Shabaab fled from the armored vehicles. The TFG re-took the Abdi-Aziz and Shibis districts, including key landmarks the Global Hotel and Old Seaport, according to government contacts. The TFG also drove into the Karan district. In Karan, President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed and State Minister "Indha Adde" conducted a press conference from Keysanai Hospital, well inside formerly al-Shabaab-held neighborhoods. Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed expressed confidence about the TFG's ability to fight al-Shabaab and asked for additional Ugandan troops to be sent to the Jubas. By the end of July 12, the TFG forces had pushed their attack a kilometer or more into extremist neighborhoods to the north and east of Villa Somalia. A TFG spokesman announced they had killed 40 al-Shabaab or Hizbul Islami fighters.

15. On July 13 Prime Minister Omar Sharmarke and others told us the TFG had conceded some of its outlying territorial gains, but still controlled the Global Hotel in the Shibis district, and the Old Sea Port in Abdi-Aziz. Parts of Karan had reportedly been retaken by al-Shabaab. One of our Mogadishu contacts said there was general calm in the areas of fighting. AMISOM armor was inside its bases.
SLUTZ